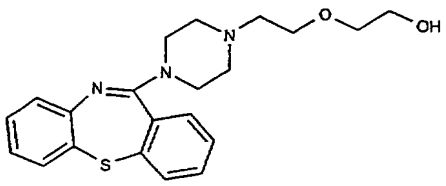
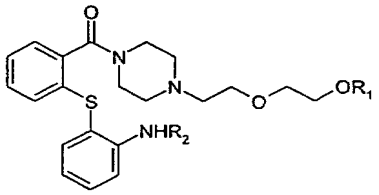
CLAIMS

1. A method for the preparation of the compound of formula I or a salt thereof



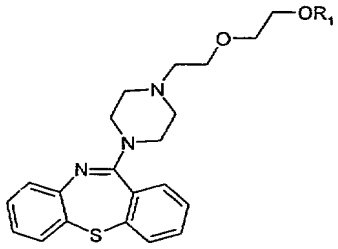
I

by cyclization of a compound of formula II or a salt thereof



II

wherein R_1 is a hydroxyl protecting group selected from the group consisting of acetyl, benzoyl, pivaloyl, benzyl, 4-methoxybenzyl, allyl, tetrahydropyranyl, silyl, alkyl carbonate, aryl carbonate, aralkyl carbonate, benzyl carbonate, allylsulfonyl, benzylsulfonyl, toluenesulfonyl and R2 is H or a suitable amino protecting group , e.g. acetyl, pivaloyl or benzyl to produce a compound of formula III or a salt thereof



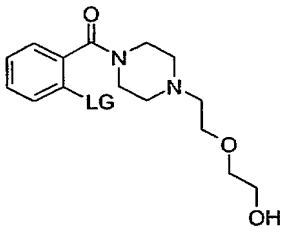
III

in which R_1 is defined as above, which on removal of R_1 yields compound I or a salt thereof.

2. A process according to claim 1 where compound of formula I is further reacted to a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the cyclization is carried out using phosphorus oxychloride.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the compound of formula II or a salt thereof is obtained by coupling of 2-aminothiophenol with a compound of formula IV or a salt thereof,



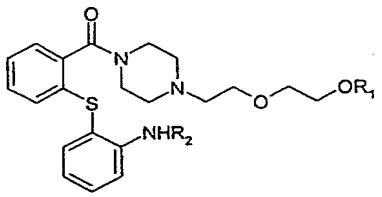
IV

wherein LG represents halogen, diazonium, trifluoromethyl, O-p-toluenesulfonyl, O-trifluoromethanesulfonyl or O-methanesulfonyl and reacting the resulting intermediate with at least one reagent providing at least the protective group R_1, and optionally R_2.

5. The compound of formula IV, wherein LG is I or Br.

6. [2-(2-amino-phenylsulfanyl)-phenyl-{4(2-(2-hydroxyethoxy)ethyl]piperazin-1-yl} methanone.

7. The compound of formula



wherein R_1 and R_2 are defined as in claim 1.

8. The compound of claim 7, wherein R_1 and R_2 are both acetyl.

9. The compound of claim 7, wherein R_1 is acetyl and R_2 is H.

10. (4-[2-(2-acetyloxyethoxy)ethyl]-1-piperazinyl]dibenzo[b,f]-1,4-thiazepine.